

SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS

The amendment to Claim 1 is supported by Examples 6 and 8 where silicon single crystals are pulled from invention crucibles. As noted in, e.g., Example 8, polysilicon is a starting material from which silicon single crystals are pulled. New Claims 18-23 are supported at specification page 6, lines 1-6, and by the claims from which they depend. No new matter has been entered.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Song for the helpful and courteous interview of November 16, 2005. During this discussion, the Examiner explained that in making the anticipation rejection he realized that the crystallization promoter-containing layer of EP '429 was not located on either an inside or an outside of the *finished* reference crucible but that, in an intermediate step, the crystallization promoter-containing layer 4A of the reference is provided on internal layer 4, and that in his opinion this intermediate structure anticipates Claim 14.

As the Examiner will note, Applicants have amended Claim 14 so as to specify that the crucible contains the starting material for pulling silicon single crystals – polysilicon. This amendment distinguishes the present invention crucible from any arguable similarity with the intermediate product described in EP '429, as it is without question that EP '429 does not teach, suggest, or disclose that their intermediate product could be used to form silicon single crystals, and thus does not disclose or suggest that their intermediate product “crucible” should contain polysilicon therein. If this were the case, the reference would not go to the trouble of forming outer layer 3 of Figure 2, but instead would have simply stopped at the intermediate stage of their crucible manufacturing.

Of course, EP '429 did not stop their manufacturing process or suggest that the intermediate product could be used to prepare silicon single crystals. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not put polysilicon into such an unfinished article. Accordingly, the present invention crucible is neither anticipated nor obvious over the disclosure in this reference.

As also discussed during the interview, the finished crucible in EP '429 differs substantially from that presently claimed in that the inner and outer layers are quite different from what is claimed herein. In particular, and as shown in Figure 2 of the reference,

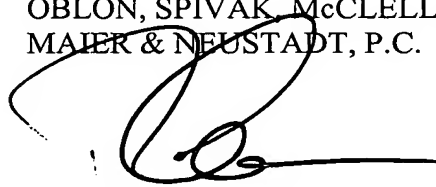
crystallization promoter-containing layer 4a is formed between outer layer 3 and internal layer 4. Thus, the promoter-containing layer is neither on an inside or an outside surface of the reference crucible.

When a crucible is configured as presently claimed a crystallized surface layer can be obtained in a very short time and provided uniformly. In the case of EP '429, crystallization of the surface of the crucible is delayed when using a high temperature. This delay can quite negatively effect the yield of single crystallization at the initial stage of pulling up a single crystal.

In view of the above amendment to the claims regarding the presence of polysilicon and the discussion held during the interview Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and early notification to this effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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